From: Jeffrey Hunt
Berkeley, California
Former Camas resident

To: rmaul@cityofcamas.us; administration@cityofcamas.us
CC: communitydevelopment@cityofcamas.us; cityclerk@cityofcamas.us
Subject: Public Comment — Parker Village SP25-1002 Design Review

Please include the following comments in the record for the May 28, 2026 Design Review Committee meeting regarding Parker Village, SP25-1002.

Dear Members of the Design Review Committee,

I am writing regarding Parker Village, SP25-1002, a major design review proposal submitted by Gayle Gerke of Makay Sposito Inc., for property located south of NW 38th Avenue and west of NW 38th Avenue and west of NW Parker Street, on parcels 125187000, 125194000, 125196000, 986028432, and 1251840000.

I am offering these comments in the spirit of careful public review. My concern is not with the existence of the design review process, but with whether the submitted materials clearly demonstrate that this particular proposal satisfies the City's design review standards for this particular site.

The staff report describes the surrounding context as vacant land to the north and south, a single-family residence to the west, and single-family residences to the east. It also describes the site itself as primarily mowed grass, with minimal shrubs and trees near the outer boundaries. In other words, this is not an already built-out commercial corridor where the surrounding development pattern is obvious. It is a large commercial proposal in an open-land and residential-edge setting.

That context matters because the Design Review Checklist says the proposal, as a whole, should comply with the design standards and be generally consistent with the overriding principles. The checklist is not merely a list of cosmetic preferences. It is meant to help the decision-maker determine whether the proposal achieves compliance with the intent of the principles or reasonably mitigates conflicts.

Based on the materials provided, several findings appear to need a stronger showing.

First, the checklist asks whether larger or higher-density structures abutting lower-density residential structures have been designed to mitigate size and scale differences. It also asks whether commercial development adjacent to residentially zoned properties has a residential feel, including size, scale, and materials compatible with neighboring buildings.

The submitted elevations show commercial buildings with brick, stone, stucco, metal canopies, storefront systems, and earth-tone materials. Those elements may soften the appearance of individual buildings, but they do not by themselves demonstrate that the overall layout, scale, and massing are compatible with the open field and nearby residential edge.

Second, the checklist requires landscaping to visually screen and buffer the use from adjoining less intense uses, including parking. The preliminary landscape plan appears to provide a substantial number of trees and plantings, but the important question is not only whether the plan meets a numerical planting requirement. The question is whether the landscape design creates a real visual and functional transition between a large commercial site and the surrounding open-land and residential context. Tree count should not be treated as a substitute for design compatibility.

Third, the checklist asks whether parking spaces are clustered in small groupings and separated by landscaping to create a pedestrian-friendly, park-like environment. It also asks whether parking is located to the interior of the development unless site constraints make that impossible. The packet should clearly demonstrate how the proposed parking layout satisfies that intent. If the site functions primarily as a conventional auto-oriented retail center, that should be addressed directly rather than assumed to satisfy the standard.

Fourth, lighting should be evaluated in relation to the actual site. The checklist calls for lighting that is low-glare, shielded, directed away from neighboring properties, and incorporated in a way that does not dominate the surrounding environment. Because this site is physically open land near residential areas, the applicant should clearly show that lighting levels, spillover, glare control, color temperature, and nighttime visual impact are appropriate for this location.

Fifth, the checklist includes historic and heritage preservation, including whether project names, markers, kiosks, architectural features, or other elements promote the historic heritage of the site or surrounding area. The name “Parker Village” suggests a place-based identity, but the packet should demonstrate how the project actually responds to the history, landscape, or heritage of this area. A conventional commercial design with regional-looking materials may not be enough to satisfy that intent.

I also have a basic public-review concern. The packet identifies the site by a general location and parcel numbers, which may be sufficient for consultants, staff, and applicants. But for ordinary members of the public, parcel numbers do not clearly show where the project sits or how it relates to the existing open field, nearby homes, vacant land, streets, and surrounding open-space context. A clear context plan should be basic for public review.

You cannot evaluate whether a project fits its surroundings if the surroundings are not clearly shown.

The submitted materials include renderings, elevations, material samples, lighting specifications, trash-enclosure details, landscape plans, a site plan, and a design review checklist. Those

materials are useful, but the central question remains whether the proposal, taken as a whole, is specifically responsive to this open-land and residential-edge setting.

My concern is that the proposal may be meeting the appearance of the checklist without fully demonstrating that it meets the checklist's intent. The materials, colors, façade treatments, landscape quantities, and lighting specifications may each respond to part of the review. But the larger question is whether the proposal as a whole fits this location.

Before the project is forwarded, I respectfully urge the Committee to require the applicant, McKay Sposito, to clearly demonstrate how the proposal satisfies the design review standards in substance, including scale, massing, screening, lighting, circulation, landscape transition, parking layout, heritage response, and compatibility with nearby residential and open-land context.

If the applicant cannot clearly demonstrate that the proposal satisfies the design review standards as a whole, the appropriate outcome should not be minor cosmetic revision. The appropriate outcome may be substantial redesign, continued review, or denial of design review approval.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Hunt